

TB. BCG works best to prevent the more serious forms of TB in children. However, the BCG vaccine does not prevent TB in all cases so you still need to know the signs and symptoms of TB.

How else can TB be prevented

The most important and effective way to prevent TB spreading is to diagnose people with the disease as soon as possible and make sure they have a full course of correct treatment.

I'm going abroad do I need a BCG injection?

If you are going to be living or working in a country with high rates of TB for more than one month, or just visiting for a similar period of time, its important that you are protected from TB. Ask for advice at your doctor's surgery or clinic.

More information

The truth about TB
www.thetruthabouttb.org

TB Alert
www.tbalert.org

Your can also phone NHS 111 on 111

For further advice on any of the issues discussed within this leaflet please ask any member of the nursing or medical staff.

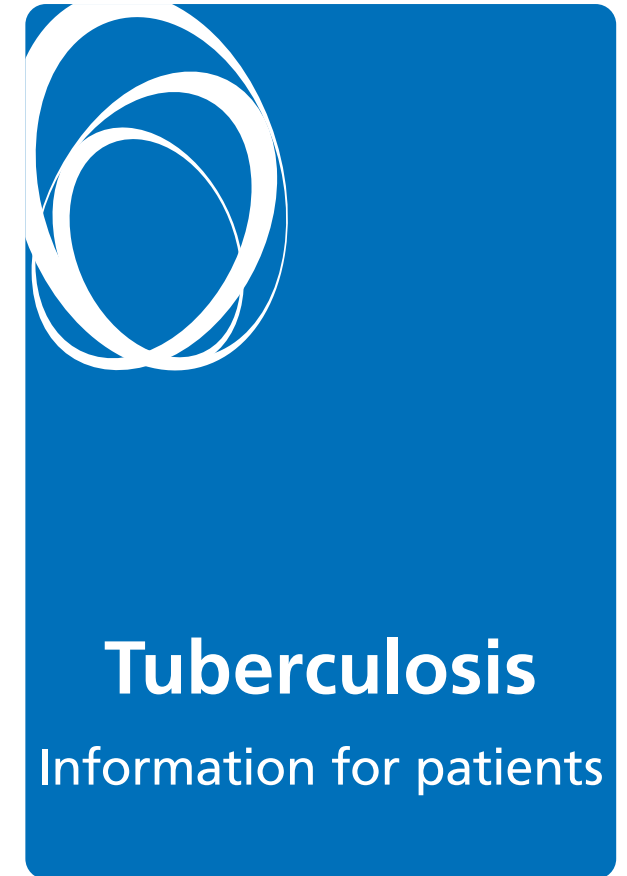
Being open

To reduce the risk of healthcare associated infection a number of things have been implemented across the Trust:

- A dedicated team responsible for helping staff maintain a high standard of care in Infection Prevention and Control
- A comprehensive Infection Prevention and Control policy which is evidence based and regularly reviewed
- All staff are required to attend a yearly education and training update
- A wide range of information leaflets have been produced for patients, carers and the public
- Infection rates are monitored across the Trust, any risks or trends identified are reported monthly to the Infection Prevention and Control Committee, the Board of Directors and Public Health England

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the Birmingham and Solihull TB Service at Birmingham Chest Clinic.

Infection Prevention and Control
University Hospitals Birmingham NHS
Foundation Trust
Birmingham and Solihull TB service
Telephone: 0121 424 1935



Building healthier lives

UHB is a no smoking Trust

To see all of our current patient information leaflets please visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets.htm

What is Tuberculosis (TB)?

TB is an infectious bacterial disease that usually affects the lungs but it can affect any part of the body.

How TB is spread and am I likely to get infected?

TB is spread through the air when people who have the disease cough or sneeze out tiny droplets. In most people, the body's immune system kills the bacteria before it causes symptoms and the person does not get ill. TB is not easily caught you have to be in close contact with someone with TB for a long time (usually many days).

Not everyone with TB is infectious, and most people with infectious TB become non-infectious after two weeks of antibiotic treatment as long as they have taken the antibiotic treatment as prescribed and are responding to the treatment.

Who is at risk of TB?

While anyone can catch TB, some groups of people are more at risk than others. These include people who:

- Have lived in the same household or been in prolonged close contact with someone with infectious TB
- Are living in unhealthy or over crowded conditions, including those who are homeless and sleeping rough
- Have lived, worked or stayed for a long

time in a country with a high rate of TB, such as south-east Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and some countries in eastern Europe

- May have been exposed to TB in their youth when the disease was more common in this country
- Are the children of parents whose country of origin has a high rate of TB
- Have been in prison
- Are unable to fight off infection (immunosuppressed) due to illness (e.g. HIV infection) or treatment
- Are addicted to drugs or misuse alcohol
- Do not eat enough to stay healthy.

How will I know if I've got TB?

The most common symptoms of TB include:

- A cough that lasts for more than three weeks
- Loss of weight for no obvious reason
- Fever and heavy night sweats
- A general and unusual sense of tiredness and being unwell
- Not wanting to eat, and in the later stages coughing up blood

All of these may be symptoms of other illness but if you have them and are worried, talk to a doctor or nurse at your local surgery or clinic or go to an NHS walk in centre or phone NHS 111 on [111](#).

If you are a close contact of someone who has been diagnosed with TB and there is

a risk you may have the infection you will be offered a check up at a TB clinic.

Treatment in hospital

If you have TB or suspected TB in your lungs, you will be cared for in a single room until you leave hospital or are no longer infectious. During this time, staff will wear masks if they are undertaking specific tasks with you which cause you to cough (aerosol generating procedures). If you are coughing a lot, you may be required to wear a mask yourself if you have to leave the ward for other procedures and tests to prevent the spread of TB to others.

If I have TB, can I be cured?

TB is curable. You will be treated with antibiotics, once treatment starts, you will begin to feel better after about two to four weeks, but the treatment has to continue for at least six months. It is very important that you complete the whole course of antibiotics. If you don't the TB may return in a form that is resistant to the usual drugs and much more difficult to treat. And you may pass on this more serious form of TB to your family and friends.

I thought TB was prevented by a vaccine?

There is a vaccine (BCG) that has been in use for many years to help protect against